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# Sally, Part 8

## Counseling in Larchmont—1965

Fiction by Angela Bauer

Thursday afternoon, before Clara and I walked from the car to Dr. Wendy Keighley's office, I was handed a large paper bag that was very soft. Carla told me I should give that to Dr. Wendy once we were alone in her office. She was expecting that bag. Carla was giving me her warmest, most loving sympathetic smile.

As we waited, I resisted looking into the paper bag, or speculating about the contents. When I was alone with Dr. Wendy I handed her the bag.

She opened it on a low table that was near the sofa. What Carla had packed was a well-used diaper bag. It not only had several of my trainers and a few pair of my plastic panties, it also had some of my gauze diapers, diaper pins, a container of baby powder and my favorite pacifier.

Dr. Wendy asked if I wanted to put on my trainers, or would I be happier if I were wearing pinned diapers? It surprised me that I answered I wanted my trainers and a pair of plastic panties. I already knew the second door in the office led to a private rest room. Dr. Wendy handed me my trainers and a pair of plastic panties. I scampered to the rest room to change into them.

Usually Dr. Wendy asked me no questions. I was surprised when she asked, "Sally, how do diapers make you feel?"

I paused a long time, thinking about that question. Eventually I answered that although I realized that pinned diapers held more wetting,

they did not allow me to take them off to use a toilet. Consequently if I wore diapers I had no choice but to wet them. Often enough Mommy had spanked me because I had wet my diaper. For years I felt that was unfair.

To me trainers and plastic panties worked well enough. If I wet those a little, I would wake up so I could change long before any wetting leaked out of the plastic panties. I went on to tell Dr. Wendy about sometimes wearing a folded diaper inside my trainers to increase the capacity to equal a diaper. The advantage was I could still remove or lower the trainers and eventually pull them back up and into place.

Dr. Wendy listened and said, "Sally, suppose you could simply un-pin your diapers? Better yet, what if you could put on your own diapers?"

I thought that over. When Violet and Carla had pinned me into diapers, they did so lovingly. Wearing those diapers did not make me feel like an infant or baby. Actually the diapers were not any less comfortable than trainers in bed.

What I resented about diapers was being changed into them roughly, by someone who was angry with me, especially Mommy. That was not fair and made me feel babyish in a very bad way.

"Dr. Wendy, is it even possible for a girl my age to change her own diapers? If I could learn to change my own diapers, would Mommy let me do that?"

Dr. Wendy started shuffling the cards. She told me that while it was rare for girls my age to still need diapers, doing so was hardly outlandish. "Sally, the only way for you to find out if you can learn to pin on your own diapers is to give it a try. Based on your dexterity I see no reason why you cannot learn to do anything you want to do, including pinning diapers. Let us both think about this over the weekend. Tomorrow is Friday, when we will not be seeing each other. We can talk about that next Monday. If you do learn to pin on your diapers, I think your mother will let you. When the time comes we all will deal with that issue."

For the rest of the session I played cards with Dr. Wendy. Probably we talked but I do not remember the topics.

When it was time for me to leave, Dr. Wendy told me my diaper bag would stay in a cabinet in her office. If I wanted to change back to ordinary panties for the ride home that was my choice. All I needed to do was leave my trainers in the rest

room. Her staff would see that they got washed and dried.

I felt it was prudent to change back to my panties before going home. I had no idea what Mommy might have planned.

Dr. Wendy had been meeting with me after school every Monday through Thursday for a month when school was out for summer. Sometimes I talked about the few months when Grandpa lived with us. I talked about that day when he was supposed to pick me up from school and drive me to my ballet lesson. He never came. It was getting late. A teacher saw me alone outside school wearing my tutu. She drove me home, where a police car was parked in front. That was how I learned Grandpa had died in a supermarket. He had stopped there to buy us a bag of peaches before picking me up. The policeman knew that because Grandpa had talked to a clerk at the store before he collapsed.

Often Dr. Wendy and I talked about my siblings. We also talked about my feelings about Mommy and Daddy getting divorced. That was complicated. At first I resented Daddy for abandoning me in the clutches of Mommy.

Daddy might yell at me if I annoyed him, but he never hit me. In front of me, Daddy refused to spank Bobby, although Bobby really deserved it that time. There had been times when Daddy was inconsiderate. I was sure that if he needed to work he could, and had, ignored us.

A prime example, which I discussed with Dr. Wendy, was when Daddy made a date for the Saturday evening while Bobby and I were spending time at his apartment.

Dr. Wendy and I talked about all that. We never reached a conclusion about why I had cut my hair.

As we talked day after day, I realized Dr. Wendy was providing me useful tips about getting along with Mommy better. Trying most of those tips I was able to avoid misbehaving in front of Mommy.

With just a little effort I was able to gain cooperation from Mommy. Although she continued to make it clear that I needed to behave, and she never removed that darn hairbrush from my room, I was rarely spanked.

A few days after Dr. Wendy and I had talked about me learning to pin on my own diapers, I was surprised that the session that day was cut short. I had changed to trainers at the start of the session. Dr. Wendy said I could wear those trainers on the drive home.

To my delight Mommy and the boys were out somewhere. Carla followed me up to my room. There she asked if I still wanted to learn to pin on my own diapers. I answered that doing so would make me feel much better when I needed a diaper.

For the next hour Carla coached me. I only stuck myself with a pin once. Carla told me she felt I was making so much progress I could practice on my own after bedtime.

The next morning when Carla came into my room to wake me up, she seemed delighted my diaper was dry and fairly neat. I said I had released it a couple of times to pee in the toilet, then was able to re-pin the right side without problems.

Subsequently on a Sunday morning when it was Mommy who woke me up, she did not react when she saw I was wearing a diaper and plastic panties. The previous night I was not diapered when Mommy had kissed me good night.

During my first month seeing Dr. Wendy, Bobby and I spent two Saturdays sleeping over at Daddy's Greenwich Village apartment. He did not leave us with Phoebe or any other babysitter. Before each such visitation Daddy had phoned to ask Bobby and me what we would like to do with him. Daddy always managed to take us to exciting places. Once he took us to a matinee of a Broadway musical. Although I have forgotten the title, I remember it was so much fun.

When visiting Daddy, I occasionally felt the need for trainers and plastic panties. Only once did Bobby have an accident. He did not wet his bed, but he must have missed the toilet. Daddy was not wearing slippers when he stepped into that puddle.

Daddy did yell in surprise, but he was not angry with us. He got out some paper towels and a sponge mop. We all sort of helped clean the bathroom floor.

Just after the Fourth of July, I started going to a day camp which was only a few blocks from Dr. Wendy's office. She felt I was making such good progress that it would be best if I walked alone from camp to her office for our early afternoon sessions. Carla drove to camp the first time, and then walked with me to Dr. Wendy's office. Poor Carla then had to walk back to bring the car to the office so she could eventually drive me home.

The next day, a Tuesday, Carla let me walk by myself, with her following me in the car. Wednesday Carla just dropped me off at camp. She told me she would pick me up after I had finished

with Dr. Wendy. That went smoothly. I felt just wonderful being trusted so much.

I realized as I entered Dr. Wendy's waiting room all by myself, I had not worn a diaper or trainers for several sessions.

For some reason that night Mommy really annoyed me. Maybe she was frustrated by Henry. Or, it could have been the boys who annoyed her. Before my bedtime, Daddy called. Since we had visited him the previous weekend, his call was unusual. He just wanted to wish us well.

The next morning, as I dressed for camp, I made a plan to surprise Daddy. By coincidence I had not spent any of the money I received for my eleventh birthday that May.

The party Mommy had thrown was far more about adults having a swell time thinking about the Kentucky Derby, a race I always resented! Still, many of the adults were friends of Henry. Instead of buying me toys, they gave me cash.

I counted the cash I had hidden in my drawer. It totaled almost \$60, far more than I realized. I put my entire savings in my purse, which I hid in a paper bag along with my most mature summer dress. I was holding the bag while Carla drove me to camp. She did not mind when I asked her to let me out of the car a couple of blocks away from the camp. My excuse was I wanted the exercise.

In fact, at that corner there was a diner with a restroom. I changed into my dress there. Outside the diner there was a bus stop, with a sign saying that particular bus went to the train station. Many times when Mommy had taken us into Manhattan on the train we had followed a bus.

Because I was not sure how much the bus cost, I had brought all the coins I had saved. I assumed if I paid for the New Haven train ticket with a \$20 bill, nobody would get concerned I was alone and without a suitcase.

After I had changed into my dress, I waited a few minutes for the bus. On it the sign said the fare was 15 cents, exact change. I gladly put 3 nickels into the machine as if I did that all the time. Very soon we reached the train station.

I knew where Mommy had bought the train tickets and how to get from there to the side of the tracks where the trains went to Manhattan. The ticket seller did not look at me when he asked where I wanted to go. In my most mature voice I told him I wanted a round trip ticket to Manhattan. That cost \$15 so I even got a \$5 bill

as change. Not very long after I bought my ticket my train pulled in. The sign on it said Grand Central Station was the final stop.

Shortly after the train pulled out of the Larchmont station a conductor asked for my ticket. He did not seem concerned about me. He simply punched my ticket and left it sticking in the holder of my seat so he could ignore me the rest of the way.

It was slightly confusing after the train did reach Grand Central Station. When I was much younger Mommy had taken Bobby and me to Daddy's old office which was on Madison Avenue.

A couple of times Daddy had driven us to his new office. That was in the Time-Life Building. I had saved a card Daddy had sent me, so I knew that was on Sixth Avenue. Where it got confusing was that the map in the station showed Fifth Avenue, Madison Avenue, Avenue of the Americas and Seventh Avenue. I was afraid that if I asked an adult they would get curious.

From watching TV I knew in Manhattan people took taxi cabs. It appeared the cab drivers knew how to get around, and did not pay attention to people riding in the cabs.

This proved to be the case. I followed the signs up the many steps to the place where cabs waited. It had not been crowded on the train and sure enough there were cabs waiting.

I got into the first one in line and simply told the driver I was going to the Sixth Avenue entrance of the Time-Life Building. It took less than 5 minutes and cost me \$1.50. Remembering some wisdom from Grandpa Gene, I handed the driver two \$1 bills and told him to keep the change. He let me out, while I still was carrying my purse and paper bag. They he sped off. He must have been satisfied by the tip. That was the first time I ever tipped anyone.

Pretending I was Mommy, I smoothed my dress. Using my mirror I ran my comb through my hair. Then I walked across the wide sidewalk to the main lobby entrance. Nobody has challenged me the entire way!